

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /091 W

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P R 271537Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9375

INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03080

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, RH

SUBJECT: GREENHILL MISSION TO RHODESIA

SUMMARY: THE FCO EXPECTS NOTHING OF SIGNIFICANCE TO E-  
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MERGE FROM LORD GREENHILL'S MISSION TO RHODESIA. END

SUMMARY.

1. THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS ATTACHED LITTLE HOPE TO LORD GREENHILL'S MISSION TO SALISBURY. THE DECISION TO SEND THE EMISSARY AT ALL WAS TAKEN RELUCTANTLY AND ONLY AFTER A FINELY BALANCED CALCULATION OF ITS POLITICAL EFFECT. ON THE NEGATIVE HAND, THE GOVERNMENT SUSPECTED THAT IN DISPATCHING THE DELEGATION IT MIGHT BE DRAWN INTO IAN SMITH'S DELAYING GAME OR POSSIBLY MANEUVERED INTO A POSITION WHICH WOULD SOMEHOW PROVE HELPFUL TO SMITH. SMITH'S LONG RECORD OF DUPLICITY, HIS RECENT AMBIGUOUS SIGNALS THROUGH PRESIDENT BANDA, HIS RAMBLING AND EVASIVE REPLY TO CALLAGHAN'S LETTER (IN WHICH THE RHODESIAN DWELLED ON ZAMBIA'S INSTABILITY RATHER THAN RHODESIA'S CRISIS), AND HIS SUBSEQUENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONTACTS WITH THE BRITISH COULD HARDLY COMBINE TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE MISSION. FURTHERMORE, THE LEFT-WING OF THE LABOR PARTY HERE AS WELL AS SOME PROGRESSIVE LEADERS IN AFRICA COULD SUSPECT THAT PERFIDIOUS ALBION MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO COMPROMISE PRINCIPLE AND REINFORCE SMITH RATHER THAN SEE RHODESIA DISINTEGRATE INTO ANOTHER ANGOLA. FINALLY, IF THE GREENHILL MISSION FAILED, AS EXPECTED, THEN IT COULD ONLY CONTRIBUTE ANOTHER SPIN IN THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF RHODESIAN POLITICS.

2. ON THE POSITIVE HAND, SMITH, HOWEVER IMPROBABLY, MAY INDEED HAVE RECONSIDERED THE BENEFITS OF CONTINUED INTRANSIGENCE, AND THE MISSION MIGHT DISCOVER SOME NEW DIRECTION IN SMITH'S THINKING THAT COULD BE PURSUED, OR PERHAPS UNCOVER A NEW NERVE THAT COULD BE PRESSED. MOREOVER, THE MODERATE WING OF THE LABOR PARTY HERE, AND CERTAINLY THE TORIES, COULD CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO GRASP EVEN A MEAGER OPPORTUNITY TO REVERSE THE COURSE OF RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS. AND FINALLY, A DEMONSTRATION OF BRITAIN'S WILLINGNESS TO HEAR WHAT SMITH HAD TO SAY COULD LEND SUPPORT TO THE FALTERING LEADERSHIP OF OTHERS, SUCH AS KAUNDA AND VORSTER, WHO ARE EQUALLY INTERESTED IN BUT INCREASINGLY SCEPTICAL OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN RHODESIA. IN THE END, IT WAS THE GRASP-AT-ANY-

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9376

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 03080

STRAW ARGUMENT THAT CARRIED THE DAY IN WHITEHALL. AS UN-  
PROMISING AS THE MISSION MAY BE, HMG CALCULATED THAT  
BRITAIN MUST AT LEAST BE SEEN TO BE EXPLORING ANY CHANCE  
OF A SOLUTION.

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3. GREENHILL, THE RETIRED PERMANENT SECRETARY IN THE

FOREIGN OFFICE, WAS SELECTED BECAUSE OF HIS FAMILIARITY WITH THE PROBLEM AND WITH SMITH. HIS PRESENT UNOFFICIAL STATUS UNDERSCORES THAT HE IS NOT TO NEGOTIATE WITH SMITH BUT ONLY EXPLORE HIS CURRENT ATTITUDE. CALLAGHAN'S POLITICAL ADVISER, TOM MCNALLY, JOINED THE MISSION IN ORDER TO REASSURE THE LABOR PARTY THAT LABOR PRINCIPLES WOULD BE SAFEGUARDED. BOTH, IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY, WILL RE-EMPHASIZE TO SMITH THAT THE CURRENT TALKS WITH JOSHUA NKOMO COULD WELL BE THE LAST CHANCE TO AVERT WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE IN RHODESIA. AND THEY WILL STRESS TO SMITH THAT HE WILL FACE THIS GLOOMY FUTURE ALONE.

4. THE FOREIGN OFFICE ANTICIPATES THAT THE ANSWER TO GREENHILL'S SIMPLE QUESTION OF WHETHER SMITH IS NOW WILLING TO NEGOTIATE ON THE BASIS OF MAJORITY RULE WILL BE AN ATTEMPT BY SMITH TO OBFUSCATE THE MATTER AND PLAY FOR MORE TIME. SMITH MAY DWELL ON THE THREAT TO THE WEST POSED BY RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS AND THEIR OUTSIDE SUPPORTERS. HE MAY ARGUE THAT A SETTLEMENT NOW WOULD ONLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE INSTABILITY OF THE REGION. OR HE MAY SEIZE A TANGENT AND TALK OF EXPANDING THE NEGOTIATIONS, PERHAPS BRINGING IN BISHOP MUZOREWA. WHATEVER SMITH'S RESPONSE, IT IS GUESSED HERE THAT IT WILL BE TYPICALLY ELUSIVE AND ELLIPTICAL. GREENHILL IS EXPECTED BACK IN LONDON OVER THE WEEKEND.

5. COMMENT: ONE FURTHER UNHAPPY RESULT OF THE GREENHILL EXERCISE, IF IT DOES PROVE FUTILE, WILL BE TO EXPAND THE SENSE OF POWERLESSNESS IN WHITEHALL AND ENHANCE THE BELIEF THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS UNABLE TO INFLUENCE EVENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY.

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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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